

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-10 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-13 CIAE-00
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6489
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USLO RIYADH
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PEPR, IZ
SUBJECT: DE BORCHGRAVE INTERVIEW WITH SADDAM HUSSEIN: SADDAM
CRIES FOUL

REF: (A) STATE 176975 (B) BAGHDAD 1509 (NOTAL)
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1. AS SADDAM'S 5-HOUR Q AND A SESSION WITH JOURNALISTS ON JULY
18 (REF B) UROOLS IN THE PRESS, OUR ATTENTION HAS BEEN CAUGHT
BY AN OBVIOUS REFERENCE TO THE BORCHGRAVE INTERVIEW AND THE
DANGERS OF DEALING WITH THE PRESS. SADDAM WAS SPEAKING - AT
LENGTH - ABOUT THE SITUATION IN NORTHERN IRAQ AND THE HANDLING OF
WITH KURDISH QUESTION WHEN HE MENTIONED THE INTERVIEW AS

FOLLOWS. (SEPTTEL WILL COVER THE KURDISH ISSUE.)

2. BEGIN TRANSLATION -

IF YOU HAVE ENOUGH AMPLE TIME WE WILL GO TOGETHER TO
THE AUTONOMOUS AREAS AND GO AROUND ALL OVER THE AREA.
WELL, YOU'LL GO THERE AND SEE WHAT IS THERE BY YOUR
OWN EYES.

I HOPE THAT YOUR CONDITIONS MAY HELP YOU IN THIS CONCERN.
I MEAN YOUR "CONDITIONS" AND NOT YOUR "WILL"...I WOULD
LIKE TO TELL YOU THAT I HAVE ALREADY MET AN AMERICAN
JOURNALISTS. DURING OUR MEETING WE TOUCHED UPON MANH
ISSUES, BUT WHAT APPEARED ABOUT OUR MEETING WAS NOT
ACCURATE NOR HONEST. I MYSELF DON'T BELIEVE THAT HE WAS
EXPRESSING THAT BY HIS OWN FREE WILL. MY DEDUCTION
IS THAT THE AMERICAN AUTHORITIES DID NOT PERMIT HIM TO
PUBLISH ALL THE FACTS AS WE EXPLAINED. THIS IS A VERY
TYPICAL CLEAR EXAMPLE OF THE LIBERAL FREEDOMS WHICH SOME
COUNTRIES ARE BOASTING OF. NOW, ARE YOU GOING TO
PUBLISH ALL THE FACTS AS WITNESSED BY YOURSELVES, OR TO
THE EXTENT THE OTHERS MAY PERMIT YOU TO DO. WE HOPE
THAT YOUR "WILL" WILL BE MORE ACTIVE TO DECIDE WHAT YOU
YOURSELVES SHOULD PUBLISH IN ORDER THAT YOU MAY SUPPORT
THE TRUTH AND ITS SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THIS CONTEXT.
END TRANSLATION.
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3. COMMENT: THOSE WHO HAVE SEEN THE TRANSCRIPT OF THE
INTERVIEW RECOGNIZE THAT THE PUBLISHED VERSION DOES NOT
DEVIATE FROM WHAT DE BORCHGRAVE HAD ON PAPER. WE STILL DO
NOT KNOW IF HE SHOWED THE EDITED VERSION TO
THE GOI BEFORE LEAVING, BUT SADDAM SEEMS TO BE TAKING STEPS
TO DISCLAIM AT LEAST A PART OF WHAT HE IS ALLEGED TO
HAVE SAID. THIS IS PROBABLY A REASONABLE DIPLOMATIC
PLOY, AND ONE THAT PERMITS IRAQ TO TELL THE WORLD HOW
IT STANDS ON A GIVEN ISSUE, E.G. RELATIONS WITH AND VIEWS
ON THE USSR, AND THEN DENY IT.

4. THE FACT THAT NEWSWEEK AND HERALD TRIBUNE STORIES
DIFFERED SOMEWHAT IN THEIR CONTENT AND EMPHASIS HAS
BEEN CITED BY SOME LOCAL OBSERVERS, WHO HAVE NOT SEEN THE
ENTIRE TRANSCRIPT, AS EVIDENT THAT SADDAM MAY BE RIGHT.
PECK

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